

Randal S. Olson, Ph.D.

AI/ML Engineer and Technical Leader

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I build machine learning systems and get them into production, and have for **15 years** across startups, biotech, insurtech, and academic research. My roots are in evolutionary optimization and AutoML: I created TPOT (**10,000+ GitHub stars**) and have published **50+ papers** with **7,300+ citations**. Most recently I co-founded an AI startup as CTO and took its AI evaluation platform from first commit to **paying customers**. Since 2012 I've also written about AI, data science, and data visualization for a general audience at randalolson.com.

Experience

Goodeye Labs

Sep 2025 to Sep 2026

Co-Founder and CTO

Remote

- **Owned product and engineering** from day one and wrote the production code.
- **Truesight**: built an AI evaluation platform that turns domain experts' no-code judgments into production LLM evals, deployed as live API endpoints that engineering teams use to score AI outputs at scale.
- **Goodeye**: rebuilt Truesight into a platform where agents run AI workflows that automated verifiers check, shipped with a Python CLI, an MCP server, agent skills, and production infrastructure. Built verifier-driven content QC on it for a major edtech customer. Both products reached **paying customers**.

AE Studio

Jun 2024 to Aug 2025

Senior Data Scientist, then Head of AI Strategy

Remote

Senior Data Scientist, Jun 2024 to Mar 2025; Head of AI Strategy, Mar 2025 to Aug 2025

- **Speech AI for early readers**: as Senior Data Scientist, built an app that checks young students' phoneme and letter-name pronunciation in real classrooms, plus a custom eval on 500+ labeled classroom recordings. The eval cut iteration from **days to hours** and showed a hyped model upgrade was not worth migrating to.
- **Solution architecture**: as the technical lead in sales, scoped AI solutions for prospective clients in edtech, biotech, finance, and enterprise software, from their highest-ROI opportunities to the systems the team would build.

RO Consulting

2022 to present

Independent AI Consultant

Remote

Short engagements designing and building custom AI systems, plus AI strategy, for select clients.

Absci

2021 to 2022

Senior AI Scientist

Vancouver, WA

- **Founding member** of the AI research team.
- **Optimization systems**: built two multi-objective optimization systems from scratch for the wet lab teams: a genetic algorithm that optimized E. coli growth media for drug production, which contributed to an Absci patent filing, and a model that balanced antibody binding affinity and naturalness, which led to [Bachas et al. \(2022\)](#).
- **Data pipelines**: built Python ETL between the wet labs and the AI team, cutting data transfer from **days to minutes**.
- **MLOps**: built the infrastructure the team used to pretrain, fine-tune, and evaluate LLMs for drug discovery.

FOXO Technologies

2018 to 2022

Chief Data Scientist

Remote

Lead Data Scientist, 2018 to 2020; Chief Data Scientist, 2020 to 2021; Scientific Advisory Board, 2021 to 2022

- **Founding data scientist**: built and led the data science team that brought epigenetic testing to life insurance risk assessment.

- **Production ML:** built statistical ML models that predict health and lifestyle traits such as smoking status and alcohol use from saliva-based DNA methylation data, and took them from prototype to production in a customer-facing platform.
- **End-to-end data stack:** open source DNA methylation processing (methylprep), a serverless AWS pipeline, and a proprietary research database.

University of Pennsylvania

Postdoctoral Researcher, then Senior Data Scientist

2015 to 2018
Philadelphia, PA

- **TPOT:** created one of the first AutoML libraries, which grew into a standalone open source project.
- **Research to software:** turned the lab's research code into maintained Python packages, including PMLB, scikit-rebate, and scikit-mdr.

Michigan State University

Graduate Research Assistant

2011 to 2015
East Lansing, MI

Built a high-performance C++ platform for simulating how intelligent behavior evolves, and published on the evolution of cooperation and intelligence.

Robins Air Force Base

Software Engineer (civilian)

2010 to 2011
Warner Robins, GA

Built software for the Electronic Warfare division as part of a larger engineering team.

Skills

ML and AI	LLM applications and evaluation, AI agents, AutoML, predictive modeling, MLOps
Optimization	Evolutionary and multi-objective optimization (Ph.D. focus), genetic programming
Languages	Python, SQL, JavaScript, Bash, C/C++, R
ML stack	Python data stack (pandas, NumPy, scikit-learn, XGBoost, matplotlib)
Production	FastAPI, PostgreSQL, Docker, GitHub Actions (CI/CD), AWS (including Lambda), GCP
AI coding	Claude Code, Codex, Cursor

Publications, open source, and writing

Research	50+ peer-reviewed papers (17 as first author), 7,300+ citations, h-index 23. Full list on Google Scholar .
Patents	U.S. 11,795,495 and 11,817,214, on machine learning for epigenetic data.
Open source	Active since 2012: 64 original projects, 20,000+ stars across projects I created, 6,600+ followers on GitHub . Best known for TPOT and PMLB .
Writing	randalolson.com : 200+ posts on data visualization, data storytelling, and explaining AI and ML to a general audience, including road trips optimized with a genetic algorithm and covered by NPR and Lonely Planet .
Community	Since 2014, head moderator of r/dataisbeautiful , Reddit's data viz community (21M+ members).

Education

Ph.D.	Computer Science and Evolutionary Biology (dual major), Michigan State University, 2015
B.S.	Computer Science, Honors in Major, University of Central Florida, 2010